

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT SERVICES
SIP-3240

SUBJECT: Credit Hours and Substantive Interaction

REFERENCE: 34CFR 600.2 (09/02/2020), Title 135, Procedural Rule, West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education, Series 18, *Assignment of Academic Credit and Financing Noncredit Instruction*

ORIGINATION: July 1, 1986

EFFECTIVE: December 9, 2008

REVIEWED: May 15, 2023

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

1.1 To communicate procedures for assignment of credit hours and establishing substantive interactive procedures.

SECTION 2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

2.1 All employees.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Credit Hour - A credit hour is an amount of student work defined by the institution, as approved by the institution's accrediting agency or State approval agency, that is consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education and that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one-quarter of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time; or at least an equivalent amount of work as required including laboratory work, internships, practicum, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credits hours. Credit hours permit an institution, in determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, to consider a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, discipline, and degree levels.

3.1.1 One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction (50 minutes for credit hour calculation) and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work each week for 15 weeks. Credit hours for all courses may be awarded in increments of one unit or less, but not less than .25 units. The next increment of credit is awarded only when the student passes the minimum number of hours for that increment. Units of credit are calculated by adding total contact hours and outside-of-class hours and dividing by the number of weeks per course. Online courses will meet these minimum.

3.2 Clock Hour - A clock hour is a period of time consisting of a 50-60 minute class, lecture, or recitation in a 60-minute period; a 50-60 minute faculty-supervised laboratory, shop training, or internship in a 60-minute period, sixty minutes of preparation in a correspondence course, or in Distance education 50-60 minutes period of attendance in a synchronous or asynchronous class, lecture, or recitation where there is opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students or asynchronous learning activating

involving academic engagement in which the student interacts with technology that can monitor and document the amount of time that the student participates in the activity. Clock hours for clinicals can be 1 hour=2 clock hours for clinical/practical or 1 hour=3 clock hours for clinical/practical, or 1 hour=8 clock hours for clinical/practical. These clock hours are decided by the program and/or accrediting body.

- 3.3 Substantive interaction - Substantive interactions is instructor-led engagement with students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and includes at least two of the following occurring each week for the duration of a course regardless of the modality.
- 3.4 The purpose of defining instructional activity that qualifies for credit hours is an instructional activity with active participation that includes but is not limited to:
 - 3.4.1 Attending a synchronous class, lecture, recitation, or field or laboratory activity, physically or online, where there is an opportunity for interaction between the instructor and students;
 - 3.4.2 Submitting an academic assignment;
 - 3.4.3 Taking an assessment or an exam;
 - 3.4.4 Participating in an interactive tutorial, webinar, or other interactive computer-assisted instruction, scenario, or lab work;
 - 3.4.5 Participating in a study group, group project, or an online discussion that is assigned by the institution; or
 - 3.4.6 Interacting with an instructor about academic matters.
- 3.5 At least an equivalent amount of work as required in Section 3.1 for other activities as established by this procedure, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, externships, clinicals, and/or other academic work leading toward the award of credit hours.

SECTION 4. PROCEDURE

- 4.1 The assignment of credit hours to a course is to be in compliance with the requirements in the definition contained in Section 3, regardless of the delivery format or modality a course. Modalities may include direction instruction (face-to-face, Zoom, video lectures, etc.), assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework, providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency, facilitating a group discussion, or other instructional activities approved by the institution. Credit hour assignments for compressed, fast-track, part-of-term, independent study, distance/online, or any other alternative method of delivery must be made to match the formulas above, i.e. or minimum of the equivalent of one credit hour classroom instruction and two hours out-of-class effort for every credit hour.
 - 4.1.1 An institution ensures regular interaction between a student and an instructor or instructors prior to the student's completion of a course or competency by:
 - 4.1.1.1 Providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency; and
 - 4.1.1.2 Monitoring the student's academic engagement and success and ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed, on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.

SECTION 5. BACKGROUND OR EXCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The faculty, staff, and administration believe all persons have a right to develop their abilities in accordance with their chosen goals, and the College provides the means through which this development may take place. The College's measure of the academic learning experience is the credit hour. Courses offered during the academic semester/part-of-term are assigned a credit value related to the number of class hours involved in the course, typically from one to four credits, but may be more depending on the program of study. Some courses require time for laboratory/clinical work in addition to the time required for lecture. For laboratory classes, every credit hour assigned requires two hours (120 minutes) each week of instruction. Allied Health, Nursing, and Salon Management/Cosmetology courses with a laboratory/clinical component differ in the time required based on national accreditation and/or state licensing board requirements. Consideration and assignments of academic credit must be consistent with Section 3.

SECTION 6. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 6.1 Rationale for assignment of academic credit:
- 6.1.1 Credit courses are offered in programs of study that lead to an Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Applied Science, or a Certificate degree which may be efficiently transferred to other higher education institutions or applied toward the completion of a Baccalaureate degree. These offerings prepare and/or upgrade a student's skills in the occupation of their choice, especially those occupations which help meet the needs of the College service area. Additionally, credit hours may be used in other certifications which prepare a student for an occupation.
 - 6.1.2 Credit courses on a non-degree basis are offered in developmental courses of study, continuing education, or workforce development.
- 6.2 Guidelines for credit courses:
- 6.2.1 Courses offered for credit should be developed under procedures that are designed to protect the integrity of credit as evidence of successful academic accomplishment and in compliance with regulations stated in the Federal Compliance Guide.
- 6.3 Credit hours and lab or other required hours will be submitted and approved through the curriculum governance process and placed on the course syllabus.
- 6.3.1 Credit courses are taught, evaluated, or directly supervised by an instructor who has met the institution's qualifications for faculty appointment.
 - 6.3.2 Credit offerings incorporate student learning outcomes, and classroom activities which all students are required to complete.
 - 6.3.3 Assigned units of credit are based on standards and guidelines for relating student learning outcomes and course requirements to units of credit.
 - 6.3.4 All courses require instructors to provide individual assessments of student work to determine which students have met the student learning outcomes or requirements. Feedback should be provided once a week at minimum and before the next part of a cumulative assignment is due, when possible, and should allow students enough time to complete assignments based on instructor feedback.

- 6.3.5 Credit courses are offered as described in the College's catalog, schedule, course syllabus, and other appropriate documents of record.
- 6.3.6 Credit courses offer recognition of achievement by an entry on the student's permanent academic record (transcript) maintained by the institution.

SECTION 7. RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

- 7.1 Faculty and departments originating new or revised credit course offerings are responsible for ensuring that recommendations are consistent with Section 6.2.1 of this procedure.
- 7.2 The Division Deans are responsible for ensuring that recommendations are in compliance with this procedure.

SECTION 8. CANCELLATION

- 8.1 SCP-3240, Assignment of Credit/Non-Credit Courses.

SECTION 9. REVIEW STATEMENT

- 9.1 This procedure shall be reviewed on a regular basis with a time frame for review to be determined by the President or the President's designee. Upon such review, the President or President's designee may recommend to the Board that the procedure be amended or repealed.

Attachments: None

Distribution: All employees of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College via www.southernwv.edu

Revision Notes: April 2010 — The policy SCP-3240 was rescinded by the Board of Governors to become a unit procedure on December 9, 2008.

January 2013 — The procedure was revised to reflect the federal definition of a credit hour, to document the standards in practice for ensuring course content and student workload expectations for courses offered comply with the definition, and to include specific responsible parties who maintain integrity of credit hour assignments for the institution.

May 15, 2023 – Substantive changes to the procedure is based on updates to 34CFR 600.2 on September 2, 2020, and references to Title 135 Procedural Rule, Series 18.